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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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Application of :  
Takashi NIWA et al. :  
Serial No. 09/740,664 : Group Art Unit: 2881  
Filed: December 19, 2000 :  
For: NEAR-FIELD OPTICAL PROBE :  
AND MANUFACTURING METHOD :  
FOR SAME, AND NEAR-FIELD :  
OPTICAL APPARATUS USING :  
THE NEAR-FIELD PROBE : Docket No. S004-4168

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COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**  
**UNDER PATENT RULES 97 AND 98**

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**S I R:**

Applicants submit this information disclosure statement pursuant to 37 CFR §§1.97 and 1.98.

The present application was filed more than three months prior to the filing of this statement. However, as of the date of filing of this statement, neither a final action under 37 CFR §1.113 nor a notice of allowance under 37 CFR §1.311 has been mailed in this application. Accordingly, this information disclosure statement is being filed under 37 CFR §1.97(c) and is accompanied by the following 37 CFR §1.97(e) certification:

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LAST PAGE

**Rule 97(e) Certification**

Applicants' undersigned attorney, pursuant to 37 CFR §1.97(e), hereby certifies that each item of information disclosed herein was cited in a Search Report of a foreign Patent Office in applicants' counterpart foreign application not more than three months prior to the filing of this information disclosure statement.

**Information Disclosure Statement**

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.98, a list of patents, publications or other information submitted for consideration by the PTO is provided on annexed Form PTO-1449. A legible copy of each item of information listed on the Form is submitted herewith. Also submitted is a copy of the Search Report which cited each item of information.

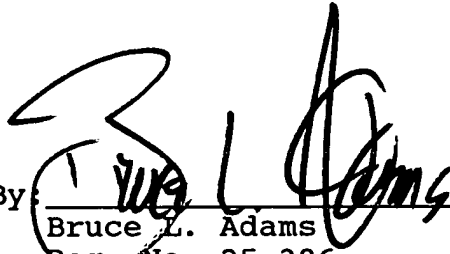
As to each item of information, if any, which is not in the English language, a concise explanation of the relevance thereof pursuant to 37 CFR §1.98(a)(3) is given in the Search Report which cited the information.

Consideration of this information disclosure  
statement is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:

  
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MAILING CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this correspondence  
is being deposited with the United States  
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envelope addressed to: Commissioner of  
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20231, on the date indicated below.

  
Bruce L. Adams

Attorney Name

Signature

December 26, 2002

Date